

St. Paul and the Mystery of the Gospel

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A sermon preached at the Paulist Church, New York City, at the celebration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Paulists.

"For as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of the body whereas they are many, yet are one body, so also is Christ. For in one spirit were we all baptized in one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free, and in one spirit we have all been made to drink. Now you are the body of Christ and each one of you individually its members."—St. Paul, I Corinth., Ch. XII.

THE most outstanding truth in the preaching of St. Paul is what he calls the "mystery of the Gospel." It is at the same time the powerful driving force behind all his activity. St. Paul was brought face to face with this mystery of the Gospel at the very moment of his conversion: "And Saul as yet breathing different threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord went . . . And suddenly a light from heaven shined round about him. And falling on the ground, he heard a voice saying to him: 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?' Who said: 'Who art thou Lord?' And he: 'I am Jesus whom thou persecutest!'"

Now Christ was risen from the dead and ascended into heaven and could suffer no more. Yet when Saul persecuted the Church, he was persecuting Christ. It would be a grievous mistake to interpret these to mean that when Saul persecuted the Church, it was just as if he were persecuting Christ. The words do not bear that meaning either in the mind of St. Paul or in the actual state of things. The words bear their exact meaning, that the Church is Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ is the Church. This tremendous truth is the mystery of the Gospel, the central point of Paul's teaching, and the key of all his ceaseless activity. There is in

the mind of St. Paul a twofold life of Christ, the life of the historical Christ and the life of the mystical Christ. The historical Christ is for the mystical Christ, and the latter is the complement and completion of the historical Christ. The historical Christ is Jesus of Nazareth, born with his body of flesh and blood of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He was and is God and man; God in virtue of his eternal generation from the Father; man by his temporal generation with human body from Mary.

The Son of God, the historical Christ, came in human flesh with a twofold purpose; first to redeem men by sharing in their human nature and by the instrumentality of that nature atoning for sin; secondly to communicate the redemption to all men, to sanctify all men, by making them share in his nature. As is said so beautifully in the Mass when the priest mingles water with wine: "Grant us through the mystery of this water and wine to become sharers of his Divinity, who has deigned to become sharers of our humanity, Jesus Christ, thy Son, Our Lord."

It is the historical Christ with his own living body of flesh and blood who has fulfilled the first objective, who has redeemed men and reconciled them to his Father through his death on Calvary. But to sanctify men, to communicate to them the fruits of the Redemption, to unite men in himself so that they may be one in him as he and the Father are one, to make men share in his sonship with God, Christ must be diffused and extended in time and space, to reach all men in all places to the end of time. Christ diffused in time and space, Christ communicated to men, is the mystical Christ, the mystery of the Gospel, the central point of Paul's teaching, and the powerful motivation of all his activity.

Christ cannot be diffused in time and space, cannot be fulfilled and completed, to use the words of St. Paul, by his natural body; that is complete and perfect in Itself and now is seated at the right hand of God. To explain how Christ is diffused and completed St. Paul uses the metaphor of the human body. Christ has besides his historical body now at the right hand of God a Mystical Body, made up of all men who are incorporated in him, made one with him by Baptism and Confirmation. But men incorporated with Christ to make with him one living organism of which Jesus Christ is the head and Christians are the members is the Catholic

Church. Hence the Catholic Church is the living Christ, the mystical Christ, Christ diffused and communicated in time and space. The Catholic Church is Christ living in his members and they all united and made one with him as head. This is what St. Augustine means when he says that the whole Christ is head and members. This is what Bossuet means when he says that the Catholic Church is Christ diffused and communicated. This is what a distinguished French theologian means when he says that the mystery of the Church consists in the equation and convertibility of the two terms, Jesus Christ and the Church. This is what St. Paul means when he says: "For as the body is one and hath many members and all the members of the body, whereas they are many, yet are one body; so also is Christ. For in one spirit were we all baptized in one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free; and in one spirit we have all been made to drink. . . . Now you are the Body of Christ and each one of you individually its members."

All this is the mystery of the Gospel, all this is the central point of Paul's teaching, all this is the powerful motivation of the apostle of the Gentiles. All this St. Paul came in contact with at the first moment of his conversion; "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Who said: 'Who art thou Lord?' and he: 'I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.'"

It was the mystical Christ whom Paul persecuted. But when I say mystical Christ, you must not get the impression that this mystical Christ is not a tremendous reality. The union of all Christians in Christ and with Christ to form a Mystical Body is not like the union of citizens in civil society to form the body politic. "The union of the Mystical Body of Christ is of a higher nature. If it is called mystical it is not in order to deny its real properties, but rather to distinguish it from the physical Body assumed by the Word in the body of Mary." What distinguishes the Mystical Body essentially from moral entities such as the body politic is that it is endowed with life and that the life comes from within.

The mystery of the Gospel then, and the mystery of St. Paul is the identity of Christ with the Church and the Church with Christ. It is the doctrine of the mystical Christ. The mystical Christ is a vital, organic, collective personality. Such a personality must have a body and a

soul. The body of the mystical Christ is composed of a head, Jesus Christ, and members, men who are united with the head, incorporated in and with Jesus Christ by Baptism and Confirmation. The soul of the mystical Christ is the Holy Spirit. "Not only does the Holy Spirit dwell in the Church and in every just Christian, as in his temple, but he is there as a principle of cohesion movement and life. And he does not act as if he were outside of us; he unites himself so closely with our inward activity that our action is his and his ours. Thus we live and are moved by him." Since this is the rôle of the Holy Spirit, it is necessary that he should take part in the growth and development of the mystical Christ. "The elements of the human organism live or die according as the soul lays hold of them or lets them go; it is the same with the elements which constitute the Mystical Body; whereas the Body is one, and has many members, and all the members of the Body, whereas they are many, yet are one Body, so also is Christ. For in one spirit were we all baptized into one Body . . . and in one spirit we have all been made to drink."

This is the great mystery of the Gospel, the mystical Christ, which is the central doctrine of St. Paul and the motivation of his conduct. He saw it in all its bearings and applications. If all men are saved and can be saved only by the mediation of Christ and by incorporation in Christ, then all men are alike. By this single fact, as by a single blow, all political distinctions are set aside. There is neither Jew or Gentile, Greek or Roman. By it too all social distinctions are set aside, there is neither bond nor free. All sex distinctions are leveled, there is neither male nor female. Every individual soul becomes by incorporation in Christ a brother of the Older Brother, Jesus Christ, a son of God and heir by right to the kingdom of God. The mystical Christ is one, there can be but one Mystical Body. There must be no schism in the Body by heresy or disobedience: "One Body and one Spirit as you are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all." The mystical Christ is holy and the members of the mystical Christ are saints. The mystical Christ is apostolic. Christ is diffused by the authentic teachings of the apostles and his choice and their legitimate successors. Above all the mystical Christ is catholic, that is,

universal. Christ died for all men: all men are either actual or potential members of his Mystical Body. Men are thus elevated to and united in a great spiritual solidarity through the diffusion of the Holy Spirit into their hearts that they may be one in Christ, as he and the Father are one. The mystical Christ is the Church and the Church is the mystical Christ, and Christ and the Church are one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.

St. Paul saw the meaning of all this. He got the vision of men incorporated in their head Jesus Christ and forming with that Head one mystical though real Body. He saw member united to member by the reality of Divine Charity in the Communion of Saints. He saw the mystical Christ offering up again and again from the rising to the setting of the sun the sacrifice of Calvary in the unbloody sacrifice of the Mass. He saw Christ, the Head, dwelling amongst his members by his Eucharistic Presence and united most intimately with them by the Bread of Life. He saw the human family joined in one brotherhood with Christ under the Fatherhood of God. He saw internal peace in men's hearts, and external peace between member and member, in the family, in the state, in the commonwealth of nations. He saw the tranquillity of order, the reign of Christ in the peace of Christ, glory to God on high and on earth peace to men of good will.

St. Paul turned from this vision and saw men in Jewry, proud, cold, weighted down by the restrictions of the law and by the fear of God from the bondage of which Christ had freed their souls. He saw men in pagandom, without hope, giving themselves up to the desires of their hearts, cruel, proud, hateful, without love and without fidelity. Like a firebrand St. Paul ran through Jewry and pagandom, fighting, toiling, suffering, stoned, shipwrecked, hated, persecuted, but never wavering, never faltering, preaching Christ and him crucified, to the Jews, a stumbling block, to the pagans, foolishness. He told all men that God could be found only in Christ, Christ only in his Mystical Body. "There is one God and one Mediator of God and men, the man Jesus Christ who gave himself, a redemption for all." "You are filled in him who is the Head of all principality and pomp." "Christ is the Head of the Church; he is the Saviour of his Body."

What, you will say, has all this to do with the seventy-fifth anniversary of the foundation of the Congregation of St. Paul? It has just this to do with it. The Paulists were founded at a time when the Catholic Church in this country was looked upon with the same scorn and contempt that St. Paul and the Jews looked upon the early Christian community of Damascus. It came at a time when the Catholic Church in this country was looked upon as something foreign and alien, when Catholics were mostly despised immigrants. It came at a time when the outbreaks and violence of the Know-Nothing movement were still fresh in men's minds. It came at a time when men in America were seeking God and salvation and happiness earnestly enough, but seeking them where they never could be found because God can only be found in Christ and Christ is one with the Catholic Church, the mystical Christ. It was then that there came forth from the very heart of non-Catholic America men who found Christ in the despised, ignored and persecuted Catholic Church. And finding him there in all his glory they sought to communicate and to diffuse him in the non-Catholic America from which they came.

Isaac Thomas Hecker, founder of the Paulist Congregation, was consumed with a passionate hunger and thirst for God which absorbed all his ardent soul. He sought God in philosophy, he sought God in social experiment, he sought God amongst eminent thinkers of the day, Emerson, Thoreau and Orestes Brownson. He sought God always and everywhere and found him as St. Paul found him where least he expected. God has for all time revealed himself in Christ. God can only be found in Christ and Christ can only be found in the mystical Christ, the Catholic Church. For the Catholic Church is Christ diffused and communicated. As St. Paul was amazed when he touched Christ in the community of Damascus, so Father Hecker was overwhelmed by the vision of Christ living in the Catholic Church of America. Father Hecker touched Christ in the Church, heard his voice teaching as of old in Galilee, saw Christ doing through and in her all his wonderful works, found Christ on her altars, beheld Christ lifted up in the Sacrifice of Calvary. It was Christ diffused and communicated. And Father Hecker heard Christ's voice, "Peace be to you. It is I, fear not. . . . See my hands and feet that it is I Myself, han-

dle and see." And Father Hecker handled and saw that the Church was Christ and the scales fell from his eyes as they fell from the eyes of his companions, the gentle Tillotson, the ascetic Baker, the poetic Young, the intellectual Hewit, and the guileless Deshon. And they were all glad when indeed they knew that the Church was Christ and Christ the Church, the mystical Christ, Christ diffused and communicated.

The first Paulists grasped that great fundamental truth which is the very center of Paul's theology. They laid hold of the mystery of the Gospel, they clasped in their very arms the mystical Christ. What a revelation to these poor souls, hungry and thirsty for Christ to find him living all unsuspected in their midst, the Way and the Truth and the Life, dispensing the truths of life by his mystical Voice and the life of life by the channels of the sacraments! Is it any wonder that this truth, this realization of the mystical Christ, that Jesus Christ lives in the Church, that the Church is Jesus Christ diffused and communicated, that this truth became the powerful motivation of their ceaseless activity, drove them into the highways and byways to proclaim the great mystery of the Gospel.

As St. Paul looked to Jewry and pagandom and saw it all oblivious of Christ dwelling in its midst, so these first Paulists turned to their beloved America and found it lost and wandering in a maze of error and falsity. They saw America, rejoicing in the youth of a true democracy. They saw her with all her natural virtues blind to the saving presence of the living Christ. They saw the leaders of the Church intent only on her own members with little immediate thought or hope of diffusing or communicating Christ to non-Catholic America. They saw that the mystical Christ was not, could not be, alien to America. America was panting and thirsting for him though it knew it not. They saw that the mystical Christ was America's possession, her heritage of which America had been unjustly deprived. They saw that the political solidarity of democratic America could never be realized unless it was elevated by the spiritual solidarity of the mystical Christ wherein there is neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free. It takes our breath away to catch the boldness of their enterprise. Theirs was a spirit like that which made St. Paul hurl himself against the pagan

world. These men in the spirit and with the courage and boldness of Paul, their master, at a time and moment when the Church in this country was looked upon as a foreign and alien community, made up their minds, they would make America Catholic, they would give to America her rightful heritage, they would give to America the mystical Christ.

How earnestly they have labored, they and their successors, in the spirit of St. Paul, how far they have succeeded in the attainment of their purpose is an oft-told tale. They went into the highways and the byways. They penetrated to the university and college campus. They preached the mystical Christ from the street corners. This great edifice the multiplicity of their works in the pulpit and on the lecture platform, the books and pamphlets that have streamed from their pens, their address, their sympathy, their hand of fellowship, all are proof, if proof were needed, that they have made themselves all things to all men to win men to Christ. They have caught the inspiration of their master Paul, and in labors, in watchings, in fastings, in chastity, in knowledge, in patience, in sweetness and the Holy Ghost, in charity unfeigned have shown themselves ministers of God and ministers of the mystical Christ.

But this to my mind is not their greatest, their most outstanding achievement. They have accomplished something far greater than all this. They have stirred up within the Church a realization of the crying need and of the weighty obligation upon all, Churchmen and laity alike, to join in this mighty offensive to make America Catholic. Every parish in this vast country is by right, and should be in fact a powerful center for the diffusion and communication of Christ to the non-Catholics within the confines of that parish. Have we done our duty when we rest merely content to dispense the truths of life to those who are already of the true fold? Have we fulfilled our obligation, unless we preach the Gospel to every creature, unless in season and out of season we preach Christ to the non-Catholics at our very doors?

We are sending out streams of missionaries across the seas to convert India and China. And the leaders of these countries are too often educated in American Universities, to return to their home land more pagan than when they came, and to ruin by their paganism the structures that

have been reared by our hard-working missionaries. St. Paul saw that to convert Rome was to convert the world. Can we not say somewhat the same thing that to convert America will be to convert the world? Some such thought as this must have been in the mind of that great American Archbishop who recently solemnly told his clergy that he held them responsible for all the souls in their parish, Catholic and non-Catholic alike. This, to my mind, is the great achievement of the Paulists, the awakening of the consciousness of Catholic America to the need, the obligation, and the possibility of diffusing and communicating Christ to non-Catholic America.

And may I say here quite earnestly and with the deepest conviction of its absolute necessity, that this Pauline and Paulist spirit to make America Catholic, this apostolic zeal with regard to all non-Catholics, whether they be pagans or Jews or Protestants, must and will spread to every priest and to every parish in this country and in the world. I happen to know by recent contact with Jews and Protestants that the spirit of God is moving over the waters, that non-Catholic hearts are thirsting for God and Christ as the heart of Isaac Hecker thirsted for him. It is for us to show them that God can only be found in Christ and Christ only in the mystical Christ, the Catholic Church. For that apostolate we need an ardent zeal, a consuming charity, a sensitive and delicate appreciation of the difficulties and mental torments of our non-Catholic brothers. We must present to them the mystical Christ with all insistence, yet with gentleness and an understanding born of the spirit of Christ. We must let our non-Catholic brethren know that the mystical Christ is their heritage as well as ours, that we are trying to make restitution to them of a birthright of which through no fault of their own they have been unjustly deprived. Mere argument will do little; love can achieve all. We cannot build up the Church in America on the ruins of charity. May that Charity of the Holy Spirit be diffused in the hearts of all of us. May every Catholic Church and every Catholic school, and every Catholic priest be a joyous invitation to the non-Catholic world to enter in, to touch and handle and see that this is Christ. May it call on them again and again to taste and see that the Lord is sweet.

The greatest instrument for this campaign to make

America Catholic is the rebirth in our modern days of Catholic Action, the participation of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy. Catholic Action flows from the doctrine of the mystical Christ as effect from cause. If the laity are incorporated in Christ by Baptism and Confirmation, if they are members of Christ, they share in accordance with their station in the Church in His office of Priest and Redeemer. In the words of Pius XI: "Catholic Action concerns the right of souls to bring the treasures of redemption to other souls thus participating in the activities of the Catholic hierarchy." It is through Catholic Action that we can convert America. America has need of Christ as much as Christ by his undying thirst for souls has need of America. It is above all things necessary that America should at long last know the truth that Christ is the Church, and the Church is Christ, the mystical Christ. "This is eternal life to know the one true God and him whom he has sent, Jesus Christ." America, the world, is dying because it has rejected Christ, the fountain of living water. They can only live by accepting him anew. It is Christ or chaos, the Catholic Church or the yawning chasm.

To the Missionary Society of St. Paul the Apostle on this their seventy-fifth anniversary, I bear as a humble messenger, the greetings, the congratulations, the good wishes of the Society of Jesus "ad multos annos." May the Paulists in the years to come fulfill the task of making America Catholic and may we, priests and laity alike, dedicate ourselves to the same end that Christ may reign in all hearts, that we may achieve the peace of Christ in the reign of Christ, so that it may be said of America at last: "For in one Spirit were we all Baptized in one Body, whether Jews or Gentiles, bond or free, and in one Spirit we have all been made to drink. . . . Now you are the Body of Christ and each one of you individually his members."

The Church's Right to Intervene in Politics

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II

THE attempts of the great Greek political thinkers to devise means for securing the subjection of the laws and actions of the State to the moral law are only the most completely reasoned examples of the general recognition by the pre-Christian mind of the ethical character of the major questions of politics, and have their analogues in traditions so remote as that of the preoccupation of Chinese moral philosophy with statesmanship, as exemplified in Lao-tse, Confucius and Mencius, and the part played by the ethical precepts of the Brahmins in tempering the despotism of the Hindu rajahs. Likewise, their failure to prevent the State becoming in the last resort the interpreter of the moral law in its own regard (if not the source of it) was only a particular aspect of the world-wide breakdown of natural religion and the morality in consequence of sin and the loss of the original grace.

For upon the withdrawal of the supernatural light there followed confusion both in the mind's perception of the laws written within it and in the external order in which it should have been able to find exterior confirmation of them; nor was there any religious body or school of philosophy (if we except the institutions and prophets peculiar to the Chosen People) that could enunciate them with the requisite authority or clarity. There is no need to look further to account for the fact that even the most sustained attempts of the ancient thinkers to base political institutions upon natural morality afforded, at one point or another, a loophole for State absolutism; nor any justification, under the circumstances, for inferring from the failure that what was attempted was

inconsistent with sound natural reason. The world had only to wait for the restoration of natural reason for its real findings to become clear.

This restoration was not effected by direct methods, such as a miraculous act of physical re-creation. It was effected by God uniting human nature to His own and inviting men, thus made His brothers, to share His own Nature.

For, if they accepted and lived by His supernatural gift, they experienced, as one of its consequences, the beginnings of a renewal of their natural perfections also—of a return to the archetypal humanity which He had restored in Himself through His Mother when He fertilized her seed by His divine Spirit.

Correspondingly, the Church which He founded for the continuance of His sojourn among men, taught them primarily the supernatural goal, and the supernatural way to it, which He had opened to them; but taught them with equal certainty the laws of the human nature in which they had to live on their way to Heaven, and live lawfully if they were to reach Heaven. Consequently she took her stand among men and human societies as, at the same time, the custodian of revelation and the long lacking authority competent to pronounce on the moral issues unceasingly raised by men's natural affairs, but hitherto confused by their sins and follies.

She fulfils these tasks in the first instance by teaching the laws of both worlds to her own members; but so long as they were outlaws in this one (as for the most part they were for nearly her first three centuries) their better grasp of their natural duties could have little political influence upon political society, and their supernatural duties were the ground of their outlawry. When, however, the time came for them to move among their fellow-men as fellow-citizens, their conduct and principles could not fail to have political effect, whether by bringing pressure on political society to mend its ways or by provoking it to press them to abandon theirs. For as citizens of whatever grade they had a corresponding responsibility, and were in duty bound to use their status towards restoring political institutions and laws to that natural standard revived in their hearts and proclaimed anew by their teachers.

At this stage, therefore, of the history of Christianity,

the double aspect of the moral teaching of the Church, concerning social and political conduct, stood manifest. First, they are rulings that certain conduct is lawful or unlawful for individual men *in foro conscientiae*. But since this conduct is enjoined, permitted, or forbidden by the institutions and laws of the State, they are also rulings, at least by implication, that certain acts or laws of the State fall, or do not fall, within the limits of the natural moral law. For no law can fall within those limits that ordains morally unlawful conduct upon individual men, or violates their natural moral rights. And, as we have seen, the best even of pre-Christian thought admitted that the acts and laws of the State were subject to moral judgments on such grounds.

Now these implicit or explicit pronouncements of the Church on the morality (and, therefore, the validity) of public acts, as well as on the rightness of private ones, will not necessarily have any direct effect upon the governments and institutions concerned. When those have come into existence outside the sphere of influence of the Catholic Church, it is likely enough that they will give only a very perfunctory recognition to the moral law as the sanction of their validity; and certain that, even so far as they do recognize it, they will not recognize the Church as its authoritative exponent. Nor will there be any constitutional provision for their invalidation or removal by the mere pronouncement by the Church that they are unlawful. Therefore, if such pronouncements are to have constitutional effect, it will have to be brought about by the action of individual Catholic citizens exercising their civic rights. This will certainly be an advance on a state of affairs in which Catholicism is outlawed and Catholics have no means of constitutional action even as individuals, but it will not amount to an actual exercise of authority by the Church over the constitutions of States.

But suppose that the political community has grown up as a Catholic community—not as in any sense the Church, for the Church is wider than any merely human society and is supernatural as well—but in the sense that practically all its members are Catholics and, further, that Catholic principles have been the determining influence in the formation of its constitution and laws. In that case the pronouncements of the Church concerning the morality and validity

of the enactments and actions of the organs of government will have constitutional force in their own right and not merely to the extent to which they can move individual Catholic citizens to constitutional action. Laws will be invalidated, not by being repealed, but by the Pope's pronouncement that they are invalid; and rulers will be deposed, not by revolutions, but by the Pope's declaration that they are not lawful rulers and that the citizens are released from their allegiance to him; and if legislators or kings are recalcitrant it will not be those who resist them who are seditious or revolutionaries, but they and those who support them.

The reason for this is that in a community of Catholics there will not be more than one authority properly recognized as the arbiter, in the last resort, of moral questions, and that authority will be the Church. It cannot rightfully make any difference whether those questions are raised by the private conduct of individuals or by the public conduct of the community or its officers. They will still be moral questions, and there is only one moral law, and, since Pentecost, only one final interpreter on earth of that moral law. Furthermore, just as the supernatural religion of the citizens will point to the Church as the proper article of all moral issues, so the sound natural political philosophy that she fosters will recognize that the fundamental issues of politics are moral issues; and, in a genuinely Catholic State, its constitution, written or unwritten, will provide, explicitly or implicitly, that the pronouncements of the Church on moral issues raised by political actions and events shall have constitutional force. Add the fact that when the Church is dealing, not with private individuals, but with political communities or their public officers, the Pope is ordinarily the arbiter in the first instance, and not merely in the last resort, and we have in outline the theory of what is called the Indirect Temporal Power.

At first sight this term may seem most unsuitable, for, as we have seen, there is a sense in which this power of the Pope over the State and its constitution is a direct power in contrast with the indirect power which he sometimes wields through the action of individual Catholic citizens using their civic rights in accordance with the principles he lays down. Nevertheless, the power is properly called indirect in the

sense that it is not exercised over political acts as such, but only in so far as they raise moral or spiritual issues. The Church, as was said earlier, fully recognizes, and indeed insists on, the right and duty of the State to regulate its own affairs, including its own constitution, within the limits of the moral law; and only takes official cognizance of such matters when there is a question of the moral law being infringed, and even then does not officially pronounce on the best political solution of the conflict with the moral law, but states the law and declares the acts infringing it invalid or the persons deposed from their office and leases it to the political community to work out a fresh solution in conformity with her pronouncements. Any further action taken beyond this is distinctly the work of individual ecclesiastics or by way of advice; it is not an exercise of Indirect Temporal Power.

Hence this power is an Indirect Temporal Power because, strictly speaking, it is a spiritual power exercised incidentally in temporal things, which it judges indirectly by way of their spiritual bearings. In this it is to be contrasted with the Direct Temporal Power, which is unequivocally a temporal and political power—the territorial sovereignty of the Pope, exercised by him, not as the head of the spiritual community which is the Church, but as a prince or king ruling territory in Italy. It is true that this power is claimed and exercised by the Popes as a peculiarly appropriate means of enabling the head on earth of the Church to exercise his spiritual functions without interference, and has, in fact, been a peculiarly appropriate means to this end for many centuries; but it remains a strictly political, that is a directly temporal power, and might conceivably be dispensed with in the future, as it was in the past, without detriment to his spiritual functions if some equally satisfactory means of securing his independence were in existence. The Indirect Temporal Power, on the other hand, is essentially a spiritual power, flowing from the very nature of the Pope's spiritual authority and functions.

It is true that it is not always operative, but this is not because the Pope's authority and functions alter with the course of time, but solely because, as we have seen, it can only come into operation when there exists a certain combination of political circumstances, namely a political com-

munity consisting of Catholics and, what is more, formed on Catholic principles, and giving explicitly or implicitly constitutional recognition to them. When these factors are present the latent Indirect Temporal Power comes into operation automatically. This, incidentally, is a sufficient answer to those who say that its exercise was a usurpation and the cessation of its exercise a recantation.

It makes it clear, also, how it was that, even when their power was, generally speaking, in operation in Western Europe, there were many occasions on which it was ineffective. For its operation depends, not merely on the theoretical recognition on the part of rulers and citizens of supernatural and natural principles which, in combination, underly it, but on their practical obedience to these principles, and this has by no means always been forthcoming even from otherwise practising Catholics or communities nursed into existence by the Church. And perhaps in no field of human action are otherwise good Catholics so prone to find excuses for disobeying the authority of the Church as in that of politics. But that proneness and its causes, of which the chief is nationalism, and its consequences, of which the chief was the disruption of Christendom, are outside the scope of the present study of the principles on which the Church intervenes in politics.

To return, then, to the circumstances under which the Indirect Temporal Power becomes operative, we see that it forms a third stage in the unfolding of the political implications of the Church's division, the first being that at which her spiritual subjects are politically outlaws, and the second being that at which they can as individual citizens wield constitutional pressure in accordance with her principles in a community not organized completely on those principles or not recognizing her as the authoritative exponent of them. In a general way it can be said that these three stages succeeded each other historically in that order, though if this were an historical study it would be necessary to qualify the statement in many ways. It can further be said, and with less need for qualification, that with the break-up of mediæval Christendom came a reversion to the second stage, in which the vast majority of Catholics are now living. Not even the most Catholic States acknowledge anything properly to be described as the Indirect Temporal Power, and on

the other hand, Catholics are nowhere, as yet, formally excluded from civic rights on the sole ground that they are Catholics. That the wheel is coming full circle and a return to the first stage is imminent over a large part of the Catholic world, seems indeed likely enough, but this is not an essay in prophecy any more than in history.

Having, then, for the sake of clarifying our ideas and terminology, enumerated the other typical forms taken by the Church's intervention in politics, it remains to dwell a little longer on the situation in which we Catholics at the moment find ourselves, when the Pope's assertions of the primacy of the spiritual and moral law against the so-called sovereign State take the form neither of martyrdom on the one hand, nor Bulls of deposition on the other, but of Encyclicals, Concordats and the Lateran Treaty. By his Encyclicals he reiterates the natural law by which politics and social questions should in the last resort be judged; applying it to those (among which economic and matrimonial problems stand out) to which the circumstances of our time have made its application most urgent; and addressing himself in the first instance to his spiritual subjects, whose civic rights lay upon them a corresponding responsibility for bringing it to bear, but also to those statesmen who are not his subjects but whose sense of moral truth may incline them to listen to its exposition even if they recognize no special or supernatural authority in him who expounds it. By his Concordats he secures some minimum of legal recognition by the State of those essential spiritual and moral rights that it has no moral right to infringe, using for a lever not only the intrinsic power of truth but also the importance to the body politic of reaching a *modus vivendi* with a section of its citizens, who though they do not constitute the State, have political weight in it, and, if they are loyal to their principles, will without desiring it, be a strain upon its fabric so long as those principles, which are universal principles, are not given their proper place among the laws even of a State which was not founded on them. By the Lateran Treaty he put his independence as a teacher of political ethics and his sovereignty as a negotiator with States both beyond cavil in an age which does not regard his commission as divine or sufficient of itself to set him outside the limits of any human authority.

Of these instruments, the Encyclicals are of the most general concern, and challenge all of us in that department of our lives and thought in which, as was said at the beginning of this essay, some Catholics are most liable to deny the Church a hearing. The Church, they say, has a right to speak on moral questions, but these are political questions; and behind this protest lies that variety of fallacies concerning politics that has already been analyzed. But the Encyclicals refute our positions, by their number, range and tenor, rendering ludicrous the plea that such interventions are occasional aberrations which one may ignore without ceasing to be a good Catholic and making explicit the precise manner in which the political questions of which they treat do in fact raise moral issues.

It is perhaps in the field of economics that this lesson most needs to be enforced. When specifically religious questions are under discussion evasion is scarcely possible even for the most reluctant among us; and when it is a matter of marriage law, birth prevention or sterilization, there exists a fairly general sense among Catholics that however much we may dislike the political and social dilemmas into which the Church's pronouncements put us, and however little we may understand their rationale, still, it is the sort of thing in which one must expect the Church to want a voice, and one must make the best of it. But when we come to economic questions, then there are many of every school of thought who find it exceedingly hard to admit that the Pope can have the right officially to claim a hearing for any but the widest and vaguest "Christian principles" capable of being invoked in favor of almost any preconceived economic policy.

Yet there was a time not so many centuries ago when in most European countries the most concrete industrial and commercial operations were naturally regarded as subject to moral judgments, and when to pass and enforce these judgments was an ordinary duty of government. Prices were denominated "just" or "unjust," not to provoke a sentimental reaction, but as appealing to an enforceable moral law. Cornering the market and holding goods back till the price rose were, under other names, punishable and punished by legal process. To take interest for the mere use of money was definitely sinful for any Christian. And all these judg-

ments could be, and were, deduced by strict logic from moral principles that are equally true today.

But today practically the whole edifice of industry, commerce and finance is based on a disregard of these judgments, and if they are made they are treated as, at most, edifying counsels which it would be nice to see followed if it could be done. The actual solutions are subjected to quite other tests, such as the maximum of profit to be made from a particular method of operation or organization, and submitted to the verdict of accountants and mathematicians rather than of teachers of ethics, either secular or ecclesiastical. Yet it is both possible and probable that if moral test were once again applied quite definitely and enforced by law—the others being relegated to a secondary place—we should find that the cancer that afflicts our economic life had been cut out at the root and that a sane and temperate prosperity followed as a highly tempered physical vigor may follow a successful operation. Were not all such goods to be added if the justice of God's kingdom was put first? But we cannot hope to have actual experience of this unless we are prepared to listen to the voice of our teacher whenever it is raised and to treat his pronouncements, not as sentiments to sweeten our dreams, but as judgment to be executed if we would escape the wrath of God. Nor should it be the least of our motives for doing this, that, while we falter, the enemy marches on and, by promising to eliminate those very injustices that we have failed to eliminate and are accused of endorsing, blinds men to the fact that his remedies require the destruction of all those securities for social justice—property, family, liberty, and the worship of God—that alone make it worth while that social injustices should be eliminated.

Other examples might, of course, be taken from other fields—the ethics of nationalism, for instance, and of internationalism—but we should only be repeating the same argument. Wherever we turn we find that definite moral teaching is our most urgent need if we are to judge and act soundly in the great social political issues of our day, and that everywhere the great Popes of the last half-century have accepted the responsibility for giving it. It remains for us to take their pronouncements seriously, not as essays but as orders. We must not be minimizers in this matter of the func-

tion of the Church in respect of political questions raising moral issues, and try to confine it to telling us of a few extreme cases in which we cannot obey a law under pain of sin. Not only passive but active obedience to her teachings is required of us, and precisely in proportion as we have the status of responsible citizens. It is sheer disloyalty to Rome to say that we take our religion from Rome but our politics from our party, when we intend by that to withdraw from Rome's judgment all questions falling within the sphere of politics. A question is not necessarily less a moral question because it is also a political one; and when it is a moral one, then as Catholic citizens we must be the more forward in pressing our principles just because it is also a political one, just because political questions are ordinarily discussed by non-Catholics without reference to definite moral principles, and if we do not raise the moral issue it will lapse.

We are near enough to the non-moral State as it is, and though it would be idle to sigh for the days when the Pope's judgments bound statesmen and States *de jure publico*, it is not idle to exercise to the full in the interest of the Pope's judgments all those constitutional rights that are still left to individual Catholics. Indeed, there is a special urgency in doing so. For constitutional rights have a precarious life in these days, when single Parties claim to "inform" the State and States so "informed" claim superiority to conscience. Unless we resist this tendency by utilizing such political rights as we are still free to use we shall find that we lose more than political liberty; and we shall not effectively sustain our political rights unless we use them to sustain moral principles in politics. To use them to promote what is merely expedient is to play into the hands of the non-moral State, which will, with some show of reason under the circumstances, claim to be source of all that we recognize as our political good.

But this is where we Catholics have a strength beyond our fellows if we will only regard the pronouncements of our Popes as weapons and not as burdens. For to no mere sect or party is it given to have the first principles of their political action laid down for them in a form indubitably ethical and spiritual and certainly true, and therefore supremely fitted to vindicate the great truth that the State exists to serve moral ends by moral means.